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Employment Security Wins National Awards for Labor Market Information

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Employment Security Department recently won three national awards for outstanding labor market information products.

Greg Weeks, director of the department's Labor Market and Economic Information Analysis branch, said Washington took top honors in an annual contest sponsored by the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.

"The beneficiaries of our work are job seekers, employers, researchers and policymakers who use our information to make informed decisions," Weeks said. "These awards are further evidence that we're meeting their needs with tools such as the Workforce Explorer Web site, which last month received more than 46,000 visits."

Washington won awards in three of eight categories.

Workforce Explorer, available at <http://www.workforceexplorer.com>, was deemed the best electronic tool for providing localized information about the workforce. The site provides easy access to a wide variety of career-assessment tools, labor-market data, and analysis reports. Users can save their favorite information on a personalized page.

Employment Security also took a first place award for creating an Internet-based program that enables staff to better serve unemployment insurance claimants and help them return to work. Managers using this program can now better direct re-employment services.

In addition, the agency was declared the runner-up in the category of "Print Products for Business Customers". The recognition was for the "Washington State Job Vacancy and Employee Benefits Survey" which analyzed information provided by 6,400 employers. Two reports produced from the survey identify which jobs are most in demand and examine the availability of worker benefits. They're available online at <http://www.workforceexplorer.com>.

"Washington's business community is fortunate to have the leadership of the Employment Security Department to analyze and translate complex and critical economic and labor force data into easy-to-use information for business decision-making," said Kate Cashen, executive director of the National Association of Workforce Agencies.

For more information about Employment Security's labor market products, contact the Labor Market Information Center at 1-800-215-1617 or lmic@esd.wa.gov. Labor market information is also available at WorkSource centers.